

# Adapting Your Interpretive Approach



## for Diverse Audiences

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Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans

A partnership between the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation,  
NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary,

& community organizations in Freedom, Marina, Monterey, Pajaro, Salinas, Seaside, Watsonville



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# Our Mission

To increase our community's understanding of ocean-related threats so that our entire community can actively contribute to ocean conservation and the protection of marine resources



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# Overview

- Demographics
- Culture, values and education
- Strategies for engaging English language learners



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# Language in the United States

- 311 Languages spoken in the U.S.
- 162 Indigenous languages
- 149 Immigrant languages

\* National Virtual Translation Center





# Languages of California

- English: 60.52%  
– 19,014,875 people
- Spanish: 25.80%  
– 8,105,445 people
- Tagalog: 1.99%  
– 626,395 people
- Chinese: 1.67%  
– 527,090 people
- Vietnamese: 1.29%  
– 407,120 people
- Korean: 0.94%  
– 298,075 people





# Demographics of California

- The nation's most racially diverse state
  - Largest Latino population in the U.S.
  - Largest Asian population in the U.S.
  - 2nd highest African-American population in the U.S.
  - 2nd highest Native-American population in the U.S.



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# Education in California

<u>1981-1982</u>	<u>2003-2004</u>
White 56%	32.5% White
Latino 26%	46.0% Latino
African-American 10%	8.1% African-American
Asian or Pacific Islander 5%	8.0% Asian
Filipino 2%	2.5% Filipino
American Indian 1%	0.8% American Indian or Alaska Native
	0.6% Pacific Islander



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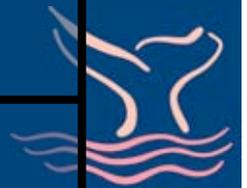
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# Education in California

Ethnicity	Teachers	Students
White	73.5%	32.5%
Latino	14.2%	46.0%
African-American	4.7%	8.1%
Asian	4.5%	8.0%
Filipino	1.2%	2.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	0.8%
Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.6%



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# The Influence of Culture & Values



# On the Learning Process



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# A Self-Test

- What do you grow in a garden?
- What is the color of a lemon?
- What type of food do you eat for dinner?
- What type of food do you eat for breakfast?
- Have you had a shower yet?
- What do you mean by “love is a journey”?



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# The Culture of “Home”

- Foundation for learning
- Existing patterns of the “home” culture can be both helpful and limiting in learning the second language community’s patterns of interaction



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# What is Culture?

- Culture includes the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time
- Culture involves both observable behaviors and intangibles such as beliefs and values, rhythms, rules, and roles



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# Values

- Operate at an intuitive level and permeate all interactions
- Are manifest in social customs, rituals, ceremonies, health, religion, law, work and play
- Students whose home culture is consistent with the beliefs and practices of the school are generally more successful in school



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# The Culture of American Schools

- Schools ARE a representations of a particular culture
  - Organization, teaching styles, curriculum
- What happens when children from another culture enter an American classroom?



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# Definitions

- Assimilation
  - A process in which members of an ethnic group are absorbed into the dominant culture, losing their culture in the process
- Acculturation
  - One culture may adapt to the mainstream culture without necessarily giving up the first culture
- Biculturalism
  - Cultures co-exist; the state of being able to function successfully in two cultures



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# Definitions

- Multiculturalism
  - The preservation of different cultures or cultural identities within a society, holding each as equally valuable to and influential on the members of society
- Diversity
  - A general term indicating that people who differ from one another are present in an organization or group



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# Definitions

- Politically correct
  - A term used to describe language or behavior that reflects sensitivity to the diversity of a group
- Cultural proficiency
  - The policies and practices of an organization or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable the organization or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment reflected in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community



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# Definitions

- Culturally proficient instruction
  - Instructors engage in practices that provide equitable outcomes for all learners
- Culturally proficient organization
  - Provides and supports conditions that create continuous learning opportunities for its members



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# Cultural Blindness

- Any policy, practice, or behavior that ignores existing cultural differences or that considers such differences inconsequential



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Social Customs
  - How have students been taught to make use of their time?
  - How do students deal with punctuality in their cultures?
  - Which activities do students perform quickly and slowly?
- Space
  - What personal distance do students use while interacting with other students and adults?
  - Does a student's culture allot different space for boys and girls?
  - How does the spatial organization of the home compare to that of the school?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Dress and personal appearance
  - Does dress differ for age, gender and social class?
  - What clothing and accessories are considered acceptable?
  - What behavior is called for during natural phenomena such as rain, lightning, thunder, earthquakes and fire?
- Rites, rituals and ceremonies
  - What rituals do students use to show respect?
  - What celebrations do students observe and for what reason?
  - How and where are parents expected to be greeted when visiting the classroom?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Work and leisure systems
  - What types of work are students expected to perform and at what age, in the home and the community?
  - Is individual work private or shared?
  - To what extent are students expected to work together?
- Health and medicine
  - Who or what causes illness and who or what is responsible for curing illness?
  - What practices exist regarding personal hygiene?
  - If a student were involved in an accident, would any of the common first aid practices be unacceptable?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Institutional influences
  - What jobs / income are available in the community and to whom?
  - What role does the law play in community life, and what relationships exist with legal authorities?
  - What aspects of religion should not be discussed in school and what behavior should not be required?
- Educational systems
  - What methods for teaching and learning are used in the home (modeling and imitation, didactic stories and proverbs, direct verbal instruction)?
  - How are children expected to interact with teachers?
  - How many years are children expected to attend school?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Gender
  - What tasks are performed by boys, what tasks by girls?
  - When, where, and how many girls and boys interact?
  - What expectations do parents and students hold for boys' and girls' achievement, and how does this differ by subject?
- Social Class
  - What type of home environment do students have-- the amount and quality of material possessions, housing, consumer goods and diet?
  - What power do parents have to obtain information about the school or to influence educational choices?
  - What resources are available in the home to augment school assignments?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Occupation
  - What kinds of work are considered prestigious or desirable?
  - What assumptions exist about the attainability of specific occupations?
  - What role does education play in achieving occupational goals?
- Educational Level
  - What educational level do the student, family and community desire for the students?
  - What degree of assimilation to the dominant culture (and to English) is expected and desired?



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# Manifestations of Culture

- Family Socialization
  - Naming practices and forms of address
  - Child-rearing practices
  - Parental involvement
  - Food preferences



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# Culture Beyond Holidays

- Culture is often incorporated into the classroom in superficial ways
  - Artifacts, holiday celebrations, laundry lists of traits and facts
- A deeper view of culture can lead teachers beyond the superficial



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# What Can You Do?

- Be honest about your own biases
- Practice the Skills & Responsibilities of an Intercultural Educator (Díaz-Rico, 2002)
- Perform a cultural self-study to better understand your own culture



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# Making an Instructional Commitment to Change\*

- Select materials for instruction
- Decide on your techniques for presenting materials
- Watch for how learners subtly respond to your choices
- Facilitate healthy conversations among the learners
- Mediate conflicts among learners
- Take advantage of teachable moments

\* Robins et al, 2002





# Reflection\*

- Are you aware of educational policies, practices, and procedures that demean individual learners or groups of learners?
- Do you have colleagues who either knowingly or unintentionally engage in practices that demean learners?

\* Robins, Lindsey. Lindsey & Terrell, p5





# Reflection\*

- Do you ever call these practices into question?
- Are you willing to confront either systems or individuals that dishonor your craft?
- Would you like to engage with colleagues in a process that will increase your awareness of diversity issues and your skills in addressing them?

\* Robins, Lindsey. Lindsey & Terrell, p5





# A Voice From the Community

- “Me sirve esta experiencia para ir y decirles a otros de cómo conservar todo esto natural, la tierra, el océano todo lo que nos dio, para dejarles algo a nuestros hijos, nuestro futuro. Nosotros estamos gastando a todo y necesitamos aprender mas de jente como ustedes que estan enseñando la importancia de toda esta conservación.”
  - Juan Reyes (MERITO participant)
- “This experience inspires me to go home and teach others how to conserve our natural places, the earth, the ocean, all that we are given, to leave something for our children, our future. We are exhausting everything and we need to learn more from people like you who are teaching the importance of protection”
  - Juan Reyes (MERITO participant)



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# Make the Connection!

*“Wow, this was a great! I’ve never been to the beach before.”*

*– 5th grade student, Seaside, CA*



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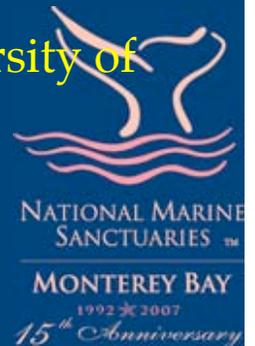
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